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Passage

Yellow light like a casual gesture
paints the hallway with two bright arcs,
plaster warm from the heat of a dinner-time
stove—enough sacredness in a lit foyer,
modest space at eight-hundred a month. But
so much can happen before the threshold
of a door: the sound of tires hissing
through oil-slick puddles, the rippled
reflection of a moon-lit, canopied sky.
Shadows in shrubbery, footsteps
furtive on the stair; the unmistakable
heft of blue steel, the handgun tremor,
the after-embrace so tight around
everything we cannot hold.

Joe Stertz

A former pastor, Joe Stertz recently received his M.F.A. in creative writing from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA.